

Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Chair
David O. Fakunle, Ph.D.

Vice Chair
Charles L. Chavis, Jr., Ph.D.

Staff
Sophie Asike, Esq.
Jourdana Claibourn
Zenita Hurley, Esq.
Kristin McFarlane, Esq.
Joy Sarimakin



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Iris Leigh Barnes, Ph.D.
Simone Barrett-Williams, Ph.D.
Michelle Coles, J.D.
Nicholas Creary, Ph.D.
Roger Davidson, Ph.D.
Maya Davis
Teisha Dupree-Wilson, Ph.D.
Christopher E. Haley
Elizabeth Hughes
Amy Millin
Izetta Mobley, Ph.D.
Carl Snowden
Marshall Stevenson, Ph.D.
Stephanie Suerth

Business Meeting Minutes – October 2023

Date: Monday, October 16th, 2023
Time: 11:35am-12:58pm Eastern Time
Location: Virtual

Attendance

Commissioners	
David Armenti	X
Iris Barnes	X
Simone Barrett-Williams	X
Charles Chavis	X
Nick Creary	X
Roger Davidson	ABS
Maya Davis	X
Teisha Dupree-Wilson	X
Omar Eaton-Martinez	ABS
David Fakunle	X
Chris Haley	X
Kirkland Hall	X
Elizabeth Hughes	X
Izetta Mobley	X
Carl Snowden	X
Marshall Stevenson	X
Stephanie Suerth	X
Staff	
Sophie Asike	X
Jourdana Claiborun	X
Zenita Hurley	X
Kristin McFarlane	X
Joy Sarimakin	X

For more information on the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission, visit
<https://msa.maryland.gov/lynching-truth-reconciliation/>

Members of the Public Present

Lindsey Baker, Emily Oland Squires, Hannah Lane, Hess Stinson, Amy Millin, Hess Love, Annie Wood, Theresa Hammond, Ariel Seay-Howard, Roicia Banks, Arnaud Kurze, Donna T. Hollie, Greg Brown, Rev. Diane Teichert

Call to Order

Chair Fakunle called the meeting to order at 11:35am.

Approval of Minutes

The September 2023 business meeting minutes were accepted by the commission.

Public & Chair's Comments

Chair Fakunle expressed sincere gratitude to all members of the public for their invaluable presence, time investment, unwavering commitment, and active participation. He encouraged everyone to introduce themselves and specify their affiliations in the comment section. He also extended appreciation to every member of the commission and the public, acknowledging their dedication to the commission's cause.

Soul Check

Commissioner Armenti highlighted the approaching 90th anniversary of the last confirmed racial terror lynching in Maryland, paying tribute to George Armwood and his descendants. Commissioner Creary commended Mr. Schwarz and the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project for a successful conference with outstanding presentations. Chair Fakunle recognized Roicia Banks, who shared her commitment to supporting the commission through her services.

Logistics Committee Report

Commissioner Davis reported no outstanding updates for the logistics committee. She emphasized the importance of initiating the planning process for the 2024 public hearings, stressing its critical role in effective planning. Commissioner Creary addressed the absence of local coalitions in three counties for the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project. He suggested coordinating with Ms. Claibourn to start reaching out to commissioners in those counties to establish networks for future hearings. Commissioner Davis confirmed that work had commenced on this initiative.

Research Committee Report

Commissioner Armenti announced the reinstatement of monthly meetings for the research committee, providing more substantive updates. These meetings are scheduled for the first Monday of every month, starting from November, to ensure detailed information is available for the commission meetings. He also highlighted improvements in Heritage Associate outreach and collaboration with descendants, proposing to distribute revised formatting details to the commission by mail. Commissioner Armenti discussed refining processes with the Maryland State Archives, aiming to enhance the commission's web presence and update victim narratives. He shared a public link for information submission and reminded everyone of the Google Drive for sharing files related to different cases.

Reconciliation & Justice Committee

Commissioner Creary invited Roicia Banks to share with the commission. Ms. Banks introduced her colleague Greg Brown and their organization, a training and technical assistance provider funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). They specialize in webinars and implementation science, aiding the commission to work more efficiently. Ms. Hurley expressed her anticipation of their three-day training, hoping it would include trauma-informed practices. Greg Brown discussed trauma-informed interactions and restorative conversations. Chair Fakunle shared a draft agenda for the training. Commissioner Mobley inquired about accessibility for commissioners, and Greg assured that there would be options, including e-learning and virtual attendance. Ms. Hurley emphasized the importance of timely feedback.

Chair Fakunle introduced Dr. Arnaud Kurze, a professor at Montclair State University, known for his work with digital archives and commitment to inclusion. Commissioner Haley elaborated on the research committee's findings and how they plan to incorporate special collection materials into the commission's work. Commissioner Creary suggested using additional funds to search for descendants of lynching mobs, potentially issuing invitations instead of subpoenas. Commissioner Mobley raised concerns about restorative practices and potential backlash against descendants. Chair Fakunle emphasized the importance of setting precedents and promoting healing. Commissioner Armenti suggested consulting with the Baltimore County Memorial Project for guidance.

New Business

Ms. Asike announced the commission's receipt of an additional \$175,000 in federal funding from the BJA's Emmett Till Cold Case Investigations and Prosecution Program. This funding aims to support the full-time work of the project manager, hire a marketing and public relations officer, and engage a consultant for policy analysis.

Announcements

Commissioner Haley shared details about a Fireside Chat with Author Clint Smith on November 1st at the Weinberg Center in Frederick County, Maryland, in honor of Heritage Center preservation.

Adjournment

Chair Fakunle moved to adjourn the public meeting at 12:58 pm, transitioning to a closed session. Commissioner Creary and Commissioner Mobley seconded the motion.